Claims

1. A nonionic surfactant of the formula **(I)**

$$R^1O(CH_2CH_2O)_nH \qquad (I)$$

in which R^1 is a hydrocarbon radical having from 16 to 18 carbon atoms and n stands for numbers from 5 to 10, with the proviso that the iodine number of the substance is in the range from 20 to 50.

2. The nonionic surfactant as claimed in claim 1, **characterized in that** R^1 has the following chain length distribution:

C_{16} saturated	:	from 55 to 65% by weight
C_{18} saturated	:	from 2 to 10% by weight
C_{18} mono-unsaturated	:	from 25 to 30% by weight
C_{18} di-unsaturated	:	from 1 to 5% by weight

with the proviso that the amounts, together, if desired, with small amounts of shorter-chain or longer-chain homologues, add up to 100% by weight.

3. The nonionic surfactant as claimed in claims 1 and/or 2, **characterized in that** R^1 has the following chain length distribution:

C_{16} saturated	:	60% by weight
C_{18} saturated	:	5% by weight
C_{18} mono-unsaturated	:	28% by weight
C_{18} di-unsaturated	:	3% by weight

with the proviso that the amounts, together, if desired, with small amounts of shorter-chain or longer-chain homologues, add up to 100% by weight.

4. The nonionic surfactant as claimed in at least one of claims 1 to 3, **characterized in that** R^1 is derived from palm stearin raw material.

5. The nonionic surfactant as claimed in at least one of claims 1 to 4, **characterized in that** n stands for 8.

6. The nonionic surfactant as claimed in at least one of claims 1 to 5, **characterized in that** it has an iodine number in the range from 30 to 40.

7. A detergent mixture comprising

(a) nonionic surfactants of the formula **(I)**

$$R^1O(CH_2CH_2O)_nH \qquad (I)$$

in which R^1 is a hydrocarbon radical having from 16 to 18 carbon atoms and n stands for numbers from 5 to 10, with the proviso that the iodine number of the substances is in the range from 20 to 50, and

(b) alkyl and/or alkenyl oligoglycosides.

8. A detergent mixture comprising

(a) nonionic surfactants of the formula **(I)**

$$R^1O(CH_2CH_2O)_nH \qquad (I)$$

in which R^1 is a hydrocarbon radical having from 16 to 18 carbon atoms and n stands for numbers from 5 to 10, with the proviso that the iodine number of the substances is in the range from 20 to 50, and

(b) alkyl ether sulfates.

9. The use of nonionic surfactants as claimed in claim 1 for producing laundry detergents.

10. The use as claimed in claim 9, **characterized in that** the laundry detergents are in liquid or gel form.